

## Message Text

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15

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-03 INR-07 L-02 ACDA-05

NSAE-00 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 USIA-06 TRSE-00 SAJ-01

NSC-05 SS-15 EB-07 COME-00 OMB-01 MC-02 /071 W

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P R 211630Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5289

INFO SECDEF WASHDC

USMISSION NATO

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

AMEMBASSY LONDON

USCINCEUR

USNMR SHAPE

C O N F I D E N T I A L THE HAGUE 0907

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: MASS, NL

SUBJ: F-104 REPLACEMENT-SECOND CHAMBER DEFENSE

COMMITTED MAY HOLD HEARINGS

1. KLAAS DE VRIES, LABOR PARTY MEMBER OF SECOND CHAMBER DEFENSE COMMITTEE, TOLD EMBOFF IN CONFIDENCE FEB 21, THAT A PROPOSAL WAS MADE IN COMMITTEE FEB 20 TO HOLD FULL SCALE HEARINGS ON QUESTION OF F-104 REPLACEMENT. COMMITTEE DECISION LIKELY TO BE TAKEN EARLY NEXT WEEK ON WHETHER HEARINGS ARE TO BE HELD, AND ON GROUND RULES FOR CONDUCTING THEM. NOTING THAT HEARINGS WERE UNUSUAL, DE BRIES SAID THAY THEY WERE NOT UNHEARD OF IN NETHERLANDS. TO HOLD HEARINGS ON MILITARY PROCUREMENT WOULD, HOWEVER, BE REAICAL DEPARTURE FROM PAST PRACTICE.

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2. ACCORDING TO DE VRIES, PROPOSAL MADE IN COMMITTEE BY D'66 MEMBER VAN MIERLO, WHO SUGGESTED THAT IT WOULD BE APPROPRIATE FOR COMMITTEE TO HOLD TWO OR THREE-DAY HEARING, TO WHICH ALL INTERESTED PARTIES WOULD BE INVITED TO PRESENT THEIR VIEWS. DE VRIES SAID THAT IDEA PROBABLY CAME TO VAN MIERLO ONLY A MINUTE BEFORE HE MADE IT, AND THAT IT HAD TAKEN EVERYONE BY SURPRISE. GRINNING LIKE THE CHESHIRE CAT, DE VRIES SAID THAT HE THOUGHT THIS PARTY WOULD SUPPORT THE PROPOSAL.

3. WHILE IDEA OBVIOUSLY NOT THOUGHT THROUGH AT THE MOMENT, PARLIAMENTARY LABOR PARTY IS INTRIGUED WITH POSSIBILITY OF INVITING AIRCRAFT MANUFACTURERS (THOSE WHOSE OFFERS COVERED IN STEERING COMMITTEE REPORT, BUT ALSO NORTHROP FOR F-5E AND F-17, BAC-BREQUET FOR JAGUAR, AND HAWKER SIDDELEY FOR HARRIER), DUTCH LABOR UNIONS, AND PUBLIC ACTION GROUPS WHICH HAVE BEEN FORMED TO OPPOSE PURCHASE OF ANY AIRCRAFT OR ANY ADVANCED ONE. DE VRIES OBVIOUSLY BELIEVES HEARINGS WOULD HELP ADVANCE CAUSE OF PARLIAMENTARY LABOR PARTY AND OTHERS ON LEFT WING WHO HOPE GON WILL NOT SELECT AN ADVANCED COMBAT FIGHTER. DE VRIES AND PIET DANKERT, FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN, HAVE BEEN LEADERS IN ADVANCING PROPOSITION THAT F-104S SHOULD BE REPLACED WITH LESS EXPENSIVE AND MORE SPECIALIZED AIRCRAFT.

4. WARMING TO THE IDEA AS HE WENT ON, DE VRIES ASKED RHETORICALLY: "IT HAS SUCH OBVIOUS APPEAL, WHO COULD OPPOSE IT?" WHEN EMBOFF MENTIONED DEFMIN VREDELING FOR ONE, HE SAID THAT IT WAS TIME DEFMIN GOT BACK IN STEP WITH HIS OWN PARTY. FAILING THAT, HE THOUGHT VREDELING SHOULD TAKE PAGE FROM FORMER FONMIN STIKKER'S BOOK, I.E. RESIGN WHEN YOU GO AGAINST WISHES OF YOUR OWN PARTY, EVEN THOUGH STILL ENJOYING MAJORITY SUPPORT OF SECOND CHAMBER.

5. WHILE MOTIONS BEFORE COMMITTEES ARE SUPPOSED TO BE KEPT SECRET, DE VRIES SAID HE WAS SILLING DISCUSS THIS ONE, BECAUSE HE THOUGHT IT WOULD BE IN ALL OF THE NEWSPAPERS IN A FEW DAYS. IN AN ATTEMPT TO FORCE COMMITTEE TO ACCEPT HIS PROPOSAL, VAN MIERLO WAS CONFIDENTIAL

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CONSIDERING GOING PUBLIC, VIA THE MEDIA, WITH THE IDEA. SHOULD PROPOSAL COME TO A VOTE, POSITION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN, VAN ELSSEN OF CATHOLIC PARTY WOULD BE CRUCIAL TO ITS SUCCESS. PROGRESSIVE AND FAR LEFT PARTIES HOLD NINE OF 19 SEATS ON COMMITTEE AND WOULD NEED PICK UP ANOTHER VOTE TO GO FORWARD. THEY NOT LIKELY TO GET IT WITHOUT VAN ELSSEN'S SUPPORT. ASKED HOW CHAIRMAN HAD REACTED TO PROPOSAL, DE VRIES SAID, "LIKE THE REST OF

US, HE LAUGHED LIKE CRAZY."  
GOULD

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## Message Attributes

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